measure, fires being so numerous. He had directed a number of persons to be summoned to give evidence as to the cause of the recent fire in Aldermanbury, so that they might come to a proper verdict, whether it was caused by accident or otherwise.

As every thing connected with this novel and most important proceeding must be of interest, the following is the form of oath administered to the jury:—"You shall well and truly inquire, on behalf of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, why a certain house and premises, in Aldermanbury, were lately burned, and a true verdict give according to the evidence; so help you God."

After a patient investigation the jury returned a verdict, "That the fire was caused by accident."

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

The inhabitants of Taunton are displaying no little spirit and judgment in carrying out their determination to improve their town, and thereby render it more attractive to strangers as well as more pleasant and healthy to themselves. A public meeting is about to be convened for the purpose of electing a committee of taste, and of devising means to carry into execution those improvements which may be considered desirable. Many excellent suggestions have already been made, among them we may mention the removal of the alms-houses in Magdalene-lane, and building in their stead a number of elegant and uniform cottages; the purchasing ground for public walks; the erection of a suitable building for public concerts, lectures, &c. A prospectus for the erection of public baths has also just been issued. It is proposed to raise a capital of 800*l.* in shares of 10*l.* each. 500*l.* to be appropriated to the building, and the remainder to furniture and incidentals. These and other improvements will not only raise Taunton in the scale of places of resort, especially during the winter months, but will confer a permanent benefit upon her denizens.——The new Corn Exchange at Colchester was opened on Saturday last. The event was celebrated by a public dinner, at which upwards of eighty gentlemen sat down, and George Round, Esq., the high-sheriff of Essex, presided. The building is situate close to the old Exchange, at the entrance of High-street. The façade is composed of a receding centre and wings, the entrances being under an Ionic colonnade, and the wings are connected by pilasters of the same order. The wings are ornamented in niches or panels with two bas-relief figures the size of life, emblematic of ancient and modern agriculture. A figure of Ceres, to cap the centre colonnade, is now in course of preparation. A flight of steps leads to the interior, which is an apartment 78 feet by 47, a row of light pillars on each side supports the centre part of the roof, the northern end is semi-circular, there is a row of sky-lights running all round, and a large lantern-light in the middle. The cost of the building, independent of the purchase of the ground, is about 2,400*l.*——The committee for the restoration of the Norman Tower, Bury St. Edmunds, have once more issued an appeal to the public for means to enable them to rescue this fine specimen of Norman architecture from the destruction that threatens it. The total sum required is 2,794*l.* The subscriptions amount to 2,294*l.*, leaving still a deficiency of 500*l.*——A cemetery is about to be formed at Dudley, in Wolverhampton-street. The ground, comprising part of the fields and gardens between there and the castle bounds, in extent about ten acres, with a frontage of a hundred yards to the main street, is given by Lord Ward.——A new church is about to be erected in the Wicker, Sheffield, at the sole cost of the Misses Harrison, of Weston.——Great improvement is in progress at the Market-street entrance to Trinity Church, Cambridge. A local paper states that very handsome iron gates have recently been put up there by Messrs. Shallow and Coleman.——Government has appropriated 25,000*l.* of the grant for the improvement of harbours to that of Harwich, and the works will be commenced almost immediately.——Part of Cabourn Wold Pillar, situate one mile from Caistor, in Yorkshire, may now be seen above the trees. The stone-work is of such firm and neat execution, that great time is required even in gaining a few feet in height. Persons sailing on the Humber may now see part of the building, which, when finished, will be an ornament, and a use to most extensive views, both by sea and land, from the highest ground in Lincolnshire.——The Cliff Bridge Company, Scarborough, have accepted the tender of Mr. John Barry, to erect a sea wall from the span to the bridge.——The trustees appointed under an act of Parliament for rebuilding Staines Church have advertised for the loan of 4,500*l.* upon security of the rates.——At the last monthly meeting of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle, Dr. Glover, as secretary of a committee appointed to take steps for the immediate formation of a collegiate institution in this town, stated that the committee had memorialized Sir James Graham on the subject, and that although the answer of Sir James Graham was not favourable to the prayer of the memorial, yet it was not such as to preclude all hope of receiving assistance from Government.——The Wesleyan Chapel, at Bramley, Yorkshire, has recently been considerably enlarged and improved, and an infant school erected at a cost of upwards of 1,000*l.* Mr. Simpson, of Leeds, was the architect.——Holy Trinity Church, Hull, is undergoing a complete restoration, under the superintendence of Messrs. Binks. All the contractors are bound to complete their works before the 9th of October.——A prospectus has been issued during the past week for the erection of a harbour of refuge in the Downs, between Deal and Sandwich, and close to the branch of the South-Eastern Railway. The proposed capital is 200,000*l.*——At Huntingdon, workmen have recently been employed in pulling down the Theatre, preparatory to a chapel being erected on the spot.

New Books.

Compositions from Shakspeare's Tempest. By J. Noel Paton. Chapman and Hall. 1845.

Mr. Paton has already made himself favourably known by a volume of outlines illustrative of Shelley's Prometheus (rewarded by the Art-Union of London with an honorary premium),* and a cartoon now exhibiting in Westminster Hall, for which he has been rewarded by the Commissioners of Fine Arts. The compositions before us will not fail to increase his reputation, some of them indeed display extraordinary genius, and lead us to anticipate that their author who is quite a young man, will take a high place in his profession. We would instance more particularly No. 5, "The foul witch, Sycorax," and No. 11, "Caliban musing," which are full of power. With much cordiality, we bid him go on, and prosper.

A Manual of Writing and Printing Characters, both ancient and modern. By B. P. Wilme, Civil Engineer. Weale, Holborn.

This is a very valuable work, and should be purchased by all young engineers, architects, and surveyors. The author asserts no more than the truth when he says, "The groundwork is laid for a system of analysis never before attempted, and which will be found to afford the greatest assistance as well to the teacher as to the learner, from its placing in their hands the correct principles for the practice of the art to be acquired.

"The analysis here referred to is that of the Roman alphabet—upper and lower case, and numerals. A careful examination of the system will enable the most inexperienced to extend the investigation of the subject to all the other alphabets."

This Manual commences with an investigation of the most generally useful letters, viz., those of the round hand, the first hand taught in schools, on account of its great utility in after life. Next in order follow the Roman upper and lower case letters and numerals, in full detail, exhibiting at one view both their analytical or integral parts, and their mechanical construction. Also, the Old English and German text alphabets as adapted to English use. The architect is furnished with nine plates of curious ancient alphabets, with the authorities for each.

Mulhauser says, in his analysis of his method of teaching writing:—"Writing is a species of drawing; and, as such, an imitative art. To imitate is natural and delightful to children; the power of imitation is therefore an important agent in education, and ought to be developed and directed. In writing, the child is required to produce an imitation of letters and words, *i. e.* of complex and combined forms, which are subject to a definite order and proportion. To enable the child to do this with ease, the instructor must render the process natural and therefore intelligible. He must dissolve the combination of letters which are called words; and he must resolve complex forms called letters into their simple elementary parts; in other words, the *instructor must* ANALYZE *the objects which the child is to imitate.* The next step is also to be taken by the master—he must arrange the elementary forms in the order of their simplicity, *i. e. the instructor must* CLASSIFY *the elementary forms, so that the first efforts of the child may be directed to the imitation of the simplest forms.* By this natural process, the child soon becomes familiar with, and enabled to imitate the separate parts of letters; he gains a rational conception of their elementary forms; easily combines them, and writes LETTERS and then WORDS. The child, therefore, proceeds by SYNTHESIS, *and constructs the object from the elements furnished by the analysis of the instructor.*"

The author gives ample directions for constructing titles for maps, railway plans, &c., with numerous examples. In writing a title, he observes:—

"1st. We should decide on the *size* of the title we would have.

2nd. The *number* of *lines* we would have.

3rd. The *style* of *characters* to be used.

4th. The model or trial title should be formed, which if it suit not our taste when done, can be altered or amended in writing the title itself.

5th. The spacing or distance between the lines should be determined on.

6th. Form the lines of writing (in pencil) by putting the centre letter of each line on the centre (perpendicular) line of the title, and working the other letters in the line from the centre to either extremity. Thus we find, by referring to the *model title*, that the first line contains seven letters, of which the fourth from the commencement will of course be the centre one, and will be placed on the centre line; N is placed in position, and we next (at the proper space which has been previously determined on) put down A, and at another similar space therefrom we put down L. It now only remains (for that side of the line) to put down P, which is placed at an equal space from L as A was from N. Proceed in a similar manner to work from the centre letter N to the right hand, and when the letters are all properly shaped out with black-lead pencil at equal distances, ink them over; when this is done, the construction lines may be rubbed out, and the title will be complete."

Mr. Wilme's book should be in every office.

Liquid Air a Motive Power.—In our last number we referred to the rival systems, at present dividing public attention, for applying as a motive power, to railway propulsion and other purposes, air in a highly condensed, or in a highly rarified state. We have this week to record another step made in the same direction;—by means of enormous compression a person of the name of Evans, residing in Philadelphia, is said to have succeeded in liquifying atmospheric air, which resumes its original volume with an elastic force quite prodigious, on applying a few drops of some chemical composition. It is asserted that a train of twenty loaded waggons was transmitted a distance of sixty miles in less than an hour and a quarter, the whole motive power being the liquid air enclosed in a vessel of two gallons and a half measure, into which fell drop by drop and from minute to minute the chemical composition in question. We should mention that the source of this information is a private letter from Philadelphia published in the *Memorial de Rouen*, and seems to need the authentic confirmation of the American journals.

* Published by Holloway, Bedford-street.

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